

LAW OFFICES  
**HYMAN, PHELPS & MCNAMARA, P.C.**

JAMES R. PHELPS  
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MARC H. SHAPIRO  
FRANCES K. WU  
ROBERT T. ANGAROLA  
(1945-1996)

700 THIRTEENTH STREET, N.W.  
SUITE 1200  
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20005-5929  
(202) 737-5600  
FACSIMILE  
(202) 737-9329  
www.hpm.com

JENNIFER B. DAVIS  
OF COUNSEL

DAVID B. CLISSOLD  
CASSANDRA A. SOLTIS  
JOSEPHINE M. TORRENTE  
MICHELLE L. BUTLER  
ANNE MARIE MURPHY  
PAUL L. FERRARI  
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MICHAEL D. BERNSTEIN  
LARRY K. HOUCK  
DARA S. KATCHER\*  
KURT R. KARST  
MOLLY C. ANDRESEN  
SHAWN M. BROWN\*  
JULIE C. KLISH\*

\*NOT ADMITTED IN DC

DIRECT DIAL (202) 737-4280

December 17, 2004

BY FACSIMILE/CONFIRMATION COPY BY MAIL

Mr. Timothy A. Ulatowski  
Director, Office of Compliance  
Center for Devices and Radiological Health  
Food and Drug Administration  
2094 Gaither Road, Room 244  
Rockville, Maryland 20850 HFZ-300

Dear Mr. Ulatowski:

Enclosed are communications sent by two reproprocessors, notifying customers that FDA has determined that devices reprocessed by them are not considered to be substantially equivalent to cleared devices. SterilMed, Inc. and Vanguard Medical Concepts, Inc. sent the notices. Both are challenges to FDA, defying the agency in two important ways.

First, the communications declare that their products are safe and effective, notwithstanding that FDA has not found their products to be substantially equivalent to any predicate devices. Products which are not substantially equivalent to predicate devices are adulterated if they are introduced into interstate commerce without premarket approval by FDA. See 21 U.S.C. § 351(f)(1)(B); 21 U.S.C. § 360c(f). Is FDA willing to permit recalled products, adulterated products, to be called "safe and effective?" Is it not presumptuous for these companies to tell the hospitals that they need not be concerned because FDA will soon agree to allow the affected products to return to the market?

2003N-0191

C1

2603 MAIN STREET  
SUITE 760  
IRVINE, CALIFORNIA 92614  
IRVINE 953-7400  
FAX: IRVINE 953-7433

4819 EMPEROR BOULEVARD  
SUITE 400  
DURHAM, NORTH CAROLINA 27703  
IRVINE 313-4750  
FAX: IRVINE 313-4751

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Second, the communications make no effort to comply with FDA's recall regulations. We understand that FDA has said the withdrawal of these NSE devices possibly may not be viewed to be a recall. Irrespective of that, there is doubt that the devices are adulterated. FDA at minimum should require that there be respect for 21 C.F.R. § 7.49 (c)(2), which specifically directs that "[t]he recall communication should not contain irrelevant qualifications, promotional materials, or any other statement that may detract from the message." Both communications show no regard for this direction by FDA. In fact, the communications are promotional.

The SterilMed notice tells the hospitals "For over 90% of the devices reprocessed by SterilMed, there was no change in status." It goes on to say "it is important to note that these devices were previously cleared by the FDA and were found to be safe and effective as the original devices. Therefore, patient safety is not an issue." And the reason for the recall is obfuscated: "Since the affected devices no longer have 510(k) clearance, we are voluntarily removing them from the market in order to eliminate any confusion that this situation may create." However, the purpose of the recall is not to eliminate confusion.

Vanguard tells the hospitals that it "remains confident each of these devices is safe and efficacious for patient use based on our proven track record and the science behind the initial FDA 510(k) clearance." The company adds: "rest assured the Vanguard products on your shelves are safe and deliver the highest quality patient care." These are strong words of support for adulterated devices.

SterilMed and Vanguard do not agree with FDA's decision that their products are not substantially equivalent. This is evident in their communications, which are contemptuous of the law and regulations that FDA is bound to enforce. The appropriate agency response is to require prompt corrective messages from these companies, or for FDA itself to issue corrections.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



James R. Phelps

JRP/JMT/cld  
Enclosures

# STERILMED INC.

Medical Device Reprocessing  
Small Equipment & Instrument Repair

November 2004

CVL

To: Materials Management, Operating Room, EP Lab and GI Lab Personnel

Subject: Voluntary market withdrawal notification

As you may know, as part of its implementation of the Medical Device User Fee and Modernization Act (MDUFMA), the FDA recently announced decisions regarding the 510(k) clearance of devices reprocessed by SterilMed. For over 90% of the devices reprocessed by SterilMed, there was no change in status. For the remaining devices, the FDA issued non-substantially equivalent (NSE) letters or SterilMed removed the devices from further consideration. SterilMed will need to provide additional technical information to the FDA in order to obtain 510(k) clearance for the NSE devices. Until we have that clearance, we are putting the affected devices on a regulatory hold, i.e. we will suspend reprocessing until further notice. However, it is important to note that these devices were previously cleared by the FDA and were found to be as safe and effective as the original devices. Therefore, patient safety is not an issue.

An account-specific list of affected devices is provided in the attached list.

On Tuesday, November 2, 2004, we stopped shipping both the affected devices. Any purchase orders you may have had in process have been adjusted accordingly. NOTE: this voluntary market withdrawal does not affect any open but unused devices reprocessed by SterilMed.

## *How You Are Affected*

Since the affected devices no longer have 510(k) clearance, we are voluntarily removing them from the market in order to eliminate any confusion that this situation may create. Our sales representatives and On-Site Technicians (OSTs) will contact you in the next few days to arrange to have these devices returned to SterilMed. In the meantime, we will continue to collect the NSE devices so that we can protect your savings for the future.

## *Next Steps*

To facilitate the withdrawal of affected devices from your inventory, please take the following steps:

1. Remove all affected devices from your shelves (see attached list). Hold them so that they can be returned to SterilMed. (NOTE: the complete list of affected model numbers can also be found on the customer log-in portion of our website at [www.sterilmed.com](http://www.sterilmed.com). Log into "My SterilMed" and you will find the .PDF file entitled, "SterilMed NSE and removed devices 11.2004" in the "Customer Documents" area.)
2. Complete the attached Business Reply form and FAX it to SterilMed Customer Service at (763) 488-3350.
3. If your facility has any affected product in its inventory, your SterilMed sales representative will be in touch shortly to coordinate with you to identify, collect and ship back the affected devices from your account. You may also contact your Customer Service Specialist at (888) 541-0078 to obtain more information. You will receive credit for all returned devices.

We appreciate your business and the opportunity to serve you. Should you have any questions, or receive information from the original equipment manufacturer (OEM) that concerns you, please feel free to contact Doug Fletcher at (763) 488-3446 or Cathy Futrell at (763) 488-3442.

Sincerely,

*Jeff Neichin*

Jeff Neichin

Vice President, Sales and Marketing

SterilMed, Inc.

This is an itemized list of affected devices SterilMed has shipped to you over the past 12 months.  
 You may use this as a guide to locate affected devices in your inventory for return to SterilMed.

Affected Device List								
Customer ID	Account Name	Device Type	Manufacturer	Manufacturer Catalog #	SterilMed Part Number	Total		
194	Leona Linda Medical Center - Main	Diagnostic EP Cath	BIOSENSE WEBSTER	FS-CA-252-RT	810FS-CA-252-RT	17		
				DS-DR-252-RT	810DS-DR-252-RT	57		
				FSA-DF-P10-RT	810FSA-DF-P10-RT	22		
				1088-258-RT	8101088-258-RT	13		
					CORDIS WEBSTER	DS-08DR-002-RT	CORDE-08DR-002-RT	53
			EP TECHNOLOGIES	700SD	EPT7003D	4		
		Endoscopic Trocars	ETHICON	355LD	ETH355LD	36		
				355LM	ETH355LM	6		
				355NS	ETH355NS	3		
				355ST	ETH355ST	1		
				35HLT	ETH35HLT	1		
				35LST	ETH35LST	10		
				35MLT	ETH35MLT	100		
				35NST	ETH35NST	1		
				511HT	ETH511HT	6		
				511NT	ETH511NT	20		
				511SD	ETH511SD	12		
				511SM	ETH511SM	8		
				511ST	ETH511ST	7		
				512B	ETH512B	20		
				512HT	ETH512HT	10		
				512NT	ETH512NT	15		
				512ON	ETH512ON	1		
				512SD	ETH512SD	10		
				512SL	ETH512SL	1		
				512SM	ETH512SM	5		
				512XD	ETH512XD	1		
				575SD	ETH575SD	1		
				ERCP Cannulas	MICROVASC	3088	MC3088	1
						3097	MC3097	1
194 Total						406		

## EQUIPMENT HAZARD NOTIFICATION PROGRAM (ALERTS)

**Department:** O.R., ECH O.R., E.R., Central Svc, Outpt. Surgery Ctr,  
UHC Purchasing, GI Lab, CH GI Lab, Cardiovascular Lab

**FDA/ECRI#:** Mfr 04-40

**Date Sent:** 12/2/2004

**Alert#:** 04-40

**Hazard Classification:** Serious

**In compliance with Medical Center Policy T-23, we are alerting you to a possible equipment/product hazard as noted below. Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter.**

1. Please check this recall alert and remove from service any equipment/product that is listed.
2. Take such actions as are appropriate, and document them below.
3. Complete and return this notice to the Office of Loss Control & Safety **WITHIN 10 WORKING DAYS**.
4. **PLEASE NOTE:** if you know of any department or area not listed above which should receive this notice please jot it down on this form.

\_\_\_\_\_ **No action required. (You don't have any of the devices/products identified in the alert.)**

**Action required/taken:**

- ☐ Item(s) have been returned to manufacturer/sales representative.
- ☐ Item(s) need to be picked up for return to manufacturer. Original P.O. # \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Other action taken or required. Describe: \_\_\_\_\_

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ DEPT. \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

**SEE EQUIPMENT/PRODUCT DESCRIPTION ON NEXT PAGE**

For MS&D use only: Above item(s) returned by \_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_



**VANGUARD**

November 11, 2004

Dear Vanguard Customer,

As you are aware, during the past year Vanguard and the rest of the reprocessing industry have been working to meet the requirements of the Medical Device User Fee and Modernization Act of 2002 (MDUFMA). Prior to the passage of this legislation, the FDA had cleared our products for marketing through its 510(k) clearance process.

MDUFMA added a second round of scrutiny that involved submitting supplemental validation submissions (SVS) to the FDA for certain devices that had already received 510(k) clearance. Vanguard has been extremely diligent in this matter and has met every deadline required by the FDA.

Now that the latest MDUFMA review is completed, we're pleased to tell you that 95.9% of Vanguard's product offerings are legally marketable. However, Vanguard and the other major reproducers in the industry did not receive clearance for all devices that required submission of an SVS.

Along with the rest of the industry, Vanguard is working with the FDA on the remaining few devices still not cleared. We look forward to a prompt resolution of the issue, and we fully expect to return those devices to the market in the near future.

Vanguard remains confident each of these devices is safe and efficacious for patient use based on our proven track record and the science behind the initial FDA 510(k) clearance. In the meantime, we are voluntarily withdrawing from the market those devices that have not yet received clearance, while we provide FDA with answers to additional technical questions. You know from your experience as a Vanguard customer that, as the industry leader, we do the right thing.

You should have or shortly will have the details of this voluntary market withdrawal. We appreciate your cooperation, apologize for any inconvenience, and assure you that we are working diligently to resolve the issue as quickly as possible.

With more than 7,000 legally marketable reprocessed products in our catalog, rest assured the Vanguard products on your shelves are safe and deliver the highest quality patient care.

Thank you for your continued support and confidence in Vanguard and the reprocessing industry.

Sincerely,

Charles A. Masak  
Chief Executive Officer

## MEDICAL DEVICE VOLUNTARY MARKET WITHDRAWAL NOTIFICATION

<b>PRODUCT</b>	Vanguard manufactured trocars and ultrasonic scalpels (see attached list of affected product codes on page 4).
<b>REASON</b>	<p>Vanguard is conducting a voluntary market withdrawal of Vanguard manufactured trocars and ultrasonic scalpels. Vanguard is voluntarily withdrawing these products as a result of receiving Non-Substantially Equivalent (NSE) letters on the Supplemental Validation Submissions (SVS) that it submitted pursuant to the Medical Device User Fee and Modernization Act of 2002 (MDUFMA). However, please be aware that prior to the passage of MDUFMA, Vanguard manufactured trocars and ultrasonic scalpels were determined by FDA to be as safe and effective as original devices, pursuant to the agency's traditional 510(k) clearance process.</p> <p>Vanguard will not ship these products until such time as we can provide answers to additional FDA technical questions and obtain market clearance.</p>
<b>ACTION</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Immediately examine your inventory of Vanguard trocars and ultrasonic scalpels.</li> <li>2. Remove and quarantine all affected products.</li> <li>3. Complete the attached Action Acknowledgement Form (page 3 &amp; 4 attached). If your facility has any affected product in inventory, please specify the quantity of each affected product code on the attached product list (Part II of the Action Acknowledgement Form). This form must be completed and returned to Vanguard, because Vanguard needs to document your receipt of this notification along with the type and number of units that you will be returning to Vanguard. <b>Please FAX the completed Action Acknowledgement Form to Lee Rose, Vanguard Medical Concepts, Inc., at 888-904-2334.</b></li> <li>4. Ship all affected product back to Vanguard using the following shipping information:  Vanguard Medical Concepts, Inc.  Attn: Lee Rose  5300 Region Court  Lakeland, FL 33815-5113 </li> <li>5. Representatives from Vanguard Medical Concepts, Inc. can assist you, if needed, in returning all affected products to Vanguard and completing the Action Acknowledgement Form.</li> </ol>
<b>OTHER INFORMATION</b>	<p>Vanguard will process your return and issue facility credit for the returned devices as soon as we have received both the completed Action Acknowledgement Form and the affected devices.</p> <p>Please share this information with all appropriate staff at your facility. If you have additional questions about this action, please contact Lee Rose at (800) 887-8073.</p>

CONTROL NUMBER: 20011111429  
 CUSTOMER NUMBER: FL2308TMH  
 CUSTOMER NAME: TALLAHASSEE MEMORIAL HOSPITAL  
 ADDRESS: 1300 MICCOUSKEE ROAD  
 CITY, STATE, ZIP: TALLAHASSEE, FL 32308

**PART II: LIST OF AFFECTED VANGUARD DEVICES**

Original Mfg.	Catalog No	Description	Quantity
<b>Trocars</b>			
ETHICON	35H8	5mm Optical Trocar with Non-Bladed Obturator, Handled Smooth Sleeve, 75mm	
ETHICON	35NLT	5mm Optical Trocar w/Non-Bladed Obturator, Non-Handled Stability Sleeve, 100mm	
ETHICON	35N5T	5mm Optical Trocar w/Non-Bladed Obturator, Non-Handled Stability Sleeve, 75mm	
ETHICON	35OL	5mm Optical Trocar w/Non-bladed Obturator, Non-Handled Smooth Sleeve, 100mm	
ETHICON	35OS	5mm Optical Trocar w/Non-Bladed Obturator, Non-Handled Smooth Sleeve, 75mm	
ETHICON	511NT	10/11mm Optical Trocar w/Non-Bladed Obturator, Non-Handled Stability Sleeve, 100mm	
ETHICON	511O	10/11mm Optical Trocar w/Non-Bladed Obturator, Non-Handled Smooth Sleeve, 100mm	
ETHICON	512B	10/12mm Blunt Tip Trocar 100mm, with Plug	
ETHICON	512NT	10/12mm Optical Trocar w/Non-Bladed Obturator, Non-Handled Stability Sleeve, 100mm	
ETHICON	512ON	10/12mm Optical Trocar w/Non-Bladed Obturator, Non-Handled Smooth Sleeve, 100mm	
ETHICON	355L	5mm Pyramidal Blade Trocar Smooth Sleeve, 100mm	
ETHICON	355LD	5mm Dilating Tip Trocar Stability Sleeve, 100mm	
ETHICON	355LM	5mm Dilating Tip Trocar Smooth Sleeve, 100mm	
ETHICON	355S	5mm Pyramidal Blade Trocar Smooth Sleeve, 75mm	
ETHICON	355SD	5mm Dilating Tip Trocar Stability Sleeve, 75mm	
ETHICON	355SM	5mm Dilating Tip Trocar Smooth Sleeve, 75mm	
ETHICON	355T	5mm Pyramidal Blade Trocar integrated Stability Thread, 75mm	
ETHICON	355TM	5mm Dilating Tip Trocar integrated Stability Thread, 75mm	
ETHICON	511B	10/11mm Pyramidal Blade Trocar Smooth Sleeve, 100mm	
ETHICON	511SD	10/11mm Dilating Tip Trocar Stability Sleeve, 100mm	
ETHICON	511SM	10/11mm Dilating Tip Trocar Smooth Sleeve, 100mm	
ETHICON	512B	10/12mm Pyramidal Blade Trocar Smooth Sleeve, 100mm	
ETHICON	512SD	10/12mm Dilating Tip Trocar Stability Sleeve, 100mm	
ETHICON	512SM	10/12mm Dilating Tip Trocar Smooth Sleeve, 100mm	
ETHICON	512SD	10/12mm Dilating Tip Trocar Smooth Sleeve, 150mm	
ETHICON	578SD	7/8mm Dilating Tip Trocar Stability Sleeve, 100mm	
ETHICON	T355	5mm Adjustable Stability Thread	
ETHICON	T511	10/11mm Adjustable Stability Thread	
ETHICON	T512	10/12mm Adjustable Stability Thread	
<b>Ultrasonic Scalpels</b>			
ETHICON	C514C	5mm Coagulating Shears Scissor Grip, 14cm long Curved Active Blade	
ETHICON	C523C	5mm Coagulating Shears Scissor Grip, 23cm long Curved Active Blade	
ETHICON	LC588	5mm Coagulating Shears Pistol Grip, 35cm long Blunt Active Blade	
ETHICON	LC5C8	5mm Coagulating Shears Pistol Grip, 35cm long Curved Active Blade	
ETHICON	LC5K8	5mm Coagulating Shears Pistol Grip, 35cm long Knife-Down Active Blade	

Please list the Acknowledgment Number found at the top of this form on the outside of all shipping boxes used to comply with this request. Please include a copy of the Action Acknowledgment Form (Part I) and a list of returned products (Part II) within the box.



CONTROL NUMBER: 200411111429  
 CUSTOMER NUMBER: FL2308TMH  
 CUSTOMER NAME: TALLAHASSEE MEMORIAL HOSPITAL  
 ADDRESS: 1300 MICCOUSKEE ROAD  
 CITY, STATE, ZIP: TALLAHASSEE, FL 32308

**PART II: LIST OF AFFECTED VANGUARD DEVICES**

Original Mfg.	Catalog No	Description	Quantity
<b>Trocars</b>			
ETHICON	35H5	5mm Optical Trocar with Non-Bladed Obturator, Handled Smooth Sleeve, 75mm	
ETHICON	35NLT	5mm Optical Trocar w/Non-Bladed Obturator, Non-Handled Stability Sleeve, 120mm	
ETHICON	35N5T	5mm Optical Trocar w/Non-Bladed Obturator, Non-Handled Stability Sleeve, 75mm	
ETHICON	35OL	5mm Optical Trocar w/Non-bladed Obturator, Non-Handled Smooth Sleeve, 100mm	
ETHICON	35OS	5mm Optical Trocar w/Non-Bladed Obturator, Non-Handled Smooth Sleeve, 75mm	
ETHICON	511NT	10/11mm Optical Trocar w/Non-Bladed Obturator, Non-Handled Stability Sleeve, 100mm	
ETHICON	511O	10/11mm Optical Trocar w/Non-Bladed Obturator, Non-Handled Smooth Sleeve, 100mm	
ETHICON	512B	10/12mm Blunt Tip Trocar 100mm, with Plug	
ETHICON	512NT	10/12mm Optical Trocar w/Non-Bladed Obturator, Non-Handled Stability Sleeve, 100mm	
ETHICON	512ON	10/12mm Optical Trocar w/Non-Bladed Obturator, Non-Handled Smooth Sleeve, 100mm	
ETHICON	355L	5mm Pyramidal Blade Trocar Smooth Sleeve, 100mm	
ETHICON	355LD	5mm Dilating Tip Trocar Stability Sleeve, 100mm	
ETHICON	355LM	5mm Dilating Tip Trocar Smooth Sleeve, 100mm	
ETHICON	355S	5mm Pyramidal Blade Trocar Smooth Sleeve, 75mm	
ETHICON	355SD	5mm Dilating Tip Trocar Stability Sleeve, 75mm	
ETHICON	355SM	5mm Dilating Tip Trocar Smooth Sleeve, 75mm	
ETHICON	355T	5mm Pyramidal Blade Trocar integrated Stability Threads, 75mm	
ETHICON	355TM	5mm Dilating Tip Trocar integrated Stability Threads, 75mm	
ETHICON	511B	10/11mm Pyramidal Blade Trocar Smooth Sleeve, 100mm	
ETHICON	511SD	10/11mm Dilating Tip Trocar Stability Sleeve, 100mm	
ETHICON	511SM	10/11mm Dilating Tip Trocar Smooth Sleeve, 100mm	
ETHICON	512B	10/12mm Pyramidal Blade Trocar Smooth Sleeve, 100mm	
ETHICON	512SD	10/12mm Dilating Tip Trocar Stability Sleeve, 100mm	
ETHICON	512SM	10/12mm Dilating Tip Trocar Smooth Sleeve, 100mm	
ETHICON	512X5	10/12mm Dilating Tip Trocar Smooth Sleeve, 100mm	
ETHICON	578SD	7/8mm Dilating Tip Trocar Stability Sleeve, 100mm	
ETHICON	T355	5mm Adjustable Stability Thread	
ETHICON	T311	10/11mm Adjustable Stability Thread	
ETHICON	T312	10/12mm Adjustable Stability Thread	
<b>Ultrasonic Scissors</b>			
ETHICON	CS14C	5mm Coagulating Shears Scissor Grip, 14cm long Curved Active Blade	
ETHICON	CS23C	5mm Coagulating Shears Scissor Grip, 23cm long Curved Active Blade	
ETHICON	LC55B	5mm Coagulating Shears Pistol Grip, 35cm long Blunt Active Blade	
ETHICON	LC55B	5mm Coagulating Shears Pistol Grip, 35cm long Curved Active Blade	
ETHICON	LC5K5	5mm Coagulating Shears Pistol Grip, 35cm long Knife-Down Active Blade	

Please list the Acknowledgment Number found at the top of this form on the outside of all shipping boxes used to comply with this request. Please include a copy of the Action Acknowledgment Form (Part I) and a list of returned products (Part II) within the box.